# **Planning Commission Information Guide**

## **Planning Commission meetings**

Prior to a planning commission meeting, the Planning Division staff prepares an agenda, which is posted outside City Hall, which is posted outside City Hall at the Feldheym Library and on the City's website. The agenda is divided into two sectionsconsent calendar and public hearings. Consent calendar items are expected to be routine and acted on by the Commission at one time without discussion, although any Commissioner or member of the public may request that an item be pulled from the consent calendar for discussion. During the public hearing section new planning issues and development projects are introduced to the Commission for discussion and decision. Each issue is introduced and addressed as follows:

- Staff presents a report and recommendation
- Staff responds to Commissioners questions
- Presentation by the applicant
- Questions from the Commission
- Public testimony is taken
- Applicant is afforded the opportunity to respond to the public testimony
- The Chair closes the public hearing and the Commission discusses the issue
- Commission makes its decision.

Planning Commission meetings are held on the f4th Wednesday of each month at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 300 North "D" Street San Bernardino.

# **Planning Commission Goals**

The Planning Commission is comprised of residents who volunteer their services. Some basic goals of the Planning Commission are:

- Implementation of General Plan policies.
- Protection of environmental quality.
- Enhancement of community identity.
- Promotion of aesthetically pleasing and high quality development.

#### The Role of the Public

The Planning Commission welcomes public ideas, opinions and participation during the course of the meeting. At the time on the agenda schedule for a public hearing on a particular item, the Chair will indicate that the hearing is being opened, and address the Commission by stating your name and address for the record. Each speaker will be limited to three minutes in fairness to others who may be waiting to address the Commission. Please outline your thoughts ahead of time to make your presentation more effective. In the interest of time, every speaker should attempt to address only items of concern that have not been addressed by previous speakers. Address your comments or questions to the Commission directly. If several people are representing a similar viewpoint, it may be helpful to select the best spokesperson to summarize the group's concerns. All speakers are requested to print their names and addresses on a "Speaker Request to Address Planning Commission" to ensure correct spellings and addresses for the record. The Planning Commission Chair uses the form to call speakers in an orderly manner. It is also requested that all persons conduct themselves courteously at all times and refrain from applauding, whistling, booing and other forms of public outbursts.

# The Role of the Planning Commission

State law requires that a municipal government establish a Planning Commission. The San Bernardino Planning Commission is made up of nine local residents appointed by the Mayor (2) and the Common Council (7), for four year terms. The Commission makes decisions on various land use matters, such as subdivisions, variances, conditional use permits, and development permits, and acts in an advisory capacity to the Common Council for General Plan Amendments, Development Code amendments, and specific plans. Decisions are reached through the public hearing process, which allows community residents to address the Planning Commissions with their concerns.

## The Role of the Planning Division Staff

The Planning Division serves as staff to the Planning Commission and provides technical review and recommendations on development projects. The Planning Division assists the general public, applicants and Commissioners by providing information, advice and technical expertise. The staff also assists the Planning Commission in developing planning goals and policies and implementing State and local laws related to land use planning.

# **Appeals Procedures**

**CUP** 

Planning Commission decisions can be appealed to the Mayor and Common Council, which has the authority to uphold, modify or overrule the actions of the Planning Commission. Appeals must be filed in writing along with the appropriate fees within fifteen days from the date of the Planning Commission's action. The fee is established by the Mayor and Common Council. A current fee schedule is available from the Community Development Department, and on-line at www.sbcity.org

### **Definitions of Terms**

CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act. State legislation that
	requires an analysis of potential adverse environmental
	impacts prior to a final decision on planning and zoning
	issues.

Canditional Llas Darmit A discretionary narmit granted for a
Conditional Use Permit. A discretionary permit granted for a
specific property and for a specific use. A CUP is a means
of regulating uses of property that are not permitted as a
matter of right. The permit would impose conditions to
ensure compatibility with surrounding land uses.

Density	A measure of land use intensity typically the number of
	dwelling units per acre.

EIR	Environmental Impact Report.	A requirement of CEQA
	whenever a project may have	a significant effect on the

environment. The purpose of the EIR is to provide detailed information about environmental impacts, mitigation measures and project alternatives prior to a decision being taken to approve a project.

General Plan

A State Planning law that requires the adoption of a General

Plan to guide the future growth of a community within the framework of officially adopted goals and policies addressing land use, circulation, housing, conservation, open space,

noise, public safety, etc.

Negative Declaration A determination that a proposed project will not have a

significant effect on the environment.

Non-conforming Generally refers to a structure built legally under the code

that existed at the time of construction, which does not

conform to the current zoning code.

Ordinance A City law created by and applying only to the City.

Parcel Map A minor subdivision involving the creation of up to four

residential parcels or any commercial or industrial

subdivision.

Resolution An official recorded decision of the Planning Commission

and/ or the Mayor and Common Council.

Setback The minimum required distance between a property line and

a structure.

Tract Map A subdivision involving the creation of five or more

residential parcels.

Variance A grant of exception from a specific Development Code

standard. Six specific legal findings are required for the

granting of a variance.

Further information can be obtained by calling the Community Development Department at (909) 384-5057.